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BOMB

WASHINGTON, NOV. 8 (REUTERS)--THE APPARENT DEVELO

PMENT BY RUSSIA OF A SEMI-ORBITAL SPACE BOMB CAME UNDER FURTHER SCRUTINY TODAY IN A DAY-LONG SECRET MEETING BETWEEN CONGRESSMEN AND U.S. MILITARY AND SECURITY CHIEFS.

GEN. EARLE WHEELER, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, AND CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY DIRECTOR RICHARD HELMS REPORTEDLY GAVE THEIR VIEWS ON THE WEAPON DURING A LENGTHY REVIEW OF THE U.S. MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM.

THEY ANSWERED QUESTIONS FROM THE MILITARY APPLICATIONS PANEL OF THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY COMMITTEE, WHICH HEARD PUBLIC ASSURANCES FROM PENTAGON OFFICIALS THIS WEEK THAT THE SPACE BOMB POSED NO UNSTOPPABLE THREAT TO U.S. DEFENSES.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS YESTERDAY, SECRETARY OF STATE DEAN RUSK BACKED THE GENERAL WASHINGTON LINE THAT NEAR DEVELOPMENT OF THE WEAPON DID NOT VIOLATE THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY BARRING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION FROM OUTER SPACE.

RAH/RP 7:45P

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